

METAL EDGE, INC. 2007 PH 7.5 TO 9.5 P.A.T.

FEATURES OF THE NEW HISTORY: APROPOS OF LAMPRECHT'S "DEUTSCHE GESCHICHTE"

FEW historical writings of the nineteenth century have met, on the one hand with such hearty welcome, and on the other hand with such passionate opposition as has Lamprecht's *Deutsche Geschichte*. But three years after the appearance of the first volume a second edition was begun, in 1894; and all through Germany the leading journals, magazines, and educated readers in general, joined in commending the new work. Public interest now-a-days is not limited to political questions alone; it is more and more occupied as well with social phenomena in various other lines. And here, finally, was a History of the Vaterland which recognized in past centuries conditions and problems like those which attract most attention at the present time. What more natural than that it should find sympathetic readers? Reviewers pointed out the importance it assigned to economic life, and discussed with enthusiasm its treatment of the evolution of the national civilization; the methods used they found to be new, the points of view modern, and therefore acceptable.¹ This book evidently responded to the spirit of the day. Later, however, when scholars had had time to make a detailed study of the successive volumes, appeared some of the hardest, most bitter criticism ever given to a work possessed of such dignity and of such guarantees of scientific preparation.² It was attacked on grounds, among others, of inaccuracy, of plagiarism, of wrong method, of disregard of essential facts, and of being based on entirely wrong historical conceptions. As a result there arose a conflict³ of no inconsiderable proportions between Lamprecht on the one side and several representa-

¹ The general character of the best early reviews is illustrated by: G. Winter, *Die Begründung einer social-statistischen Methode in der deutschen Geschichtschreibung durch K. Lamprecht*, in *Zeitschrift für Kulturgeschichte*, I.

² The most noteworthy criticisms have been those by: Rachfahl, *Deutsche Geschichte von wirtschaftlichem Standpunkt*, in *Preuss. Jahrb.*, LXXXIII; von Below, in *Historische Zeitschrift*, LXXI; compare Lamprecht's answer in *Deutsche Literaturzeitung*, XIV. 1499; Finke, *Die kirchenpolitischen und kirchlichen Verhältnisse zu Ende des Mittelalters nach der Darstellung K. Lamprecht's* in *Römische Quartalschrift*, IV. suppl.; id., *Genetische und klerikale Geschichtsauffassung*, Münster, 1897, 38 pp.; Hintze, *Ueber individualistische und kollektivistische Geschichtsauffassung*, in *Historische Zeitschrift*, LXXVIII.; Lentz, in *Historische Zeitschrift*, LXXVII.; Blondel, in *Revue Historique*, mai-juin, 1897; Oncken, in *Preuss. Jahrb.*, July, 1897.

³ This conflict forms the subject of a short article by M. Pirenne, in the *Revue Historique*, mai-juin, 1896, entitled *Une Polémique historique en Allemagne*.

tives of an older school on the other, in which the field, object, and method of historical science have been the main questions at issue, and in the course of which it has fallen to the author himself, to be the first to point out the chief aims and original features of his History.

Under these circumstances it is not the purpose of this article to add another to the already numerous criticisms of this epoch-making book. The task of testing in what measure Lamprecht has told the real truth concerning the history of his people shall be left for others. We prefer to try to bring together here in one view some of the most important lines of thought to be found in the *Deutsche Geschichte*, and in the conflict still going on over it, which are of importance to historical science in general and which may well be taken into mind by all by whom history is studied or taught. This endeavor involves a statement of the fundamental features of the work itself, and a contrasting of certain directing influences which it illustrates with those prevailing heretofore.

The first edition was sent out accompanied neither by a preface nor by an explanatory note of any kind, with the aim that the book should speak for itself.¹ The author was conscious, however, that its underlying idea would give offense to the older representatives of the profession, and that he could, therefore, expect a debate over the principles of historical science.² He was not disappointed, and in the course of the controversy he has taken occasion to bring to brighter light his ideas on these principles;³ ideas, moreover, which form the kernel, the fundamental features of his History. Perhaps the first step toward understanding them may be taken by observing some of the paths followed in the preparation of the work in which they are embodied.⁴

First, Lamprecht read systematically the sources for German church history and for German history in general, of the tenth

¹ Lamprecht, *Deutsche Geschichte*, zweite Aufl., Vorwort.

² Lamprecht, *Alte und neue Richtungen in der Geschichtswissenschaft*, Vorwort.

³ See especially: a. *Deutsche Geschichte*, Vorwort. b. *Die gegenwärt. Lage d. Geschichtswiss.*, in *Zukunft*, February 8, 1896. To this Fr. Meinecke made a short reply in the *Hist. Zeits.*, LXXVI. 530 f.; and Lamprecht answered in *Zum Unterschiede d. ält. u. jüng. Richtg. in d. Geschichtswiss.*, in *Hist. Zeits.*, LXXVII. 257 f., accompanying which is a short *Erwiderung* by Meinecke. c. *Das Arbeitsgebiet geschichtl. Forschung*, in *Zukunft*, April 4, 1896. d. *Die Geschichtswissenschaftl. Probleme der Gegenwart*, ibid., November, 1896. e. *Eine Wendung in geschichtswissenschaftl. Streit*, ibid., January, 1897. f. *Alte und neue Richtungen in d. Geschichtswiss.*, Berlin, 1896, 79 pp. g. *Was ist Kulturgeschichte? Beitrag zu einer empirischen Historik*, in *Deutsche Zeits. für Geschichtswiss.*, N. F., 1896-1897, pp. 75-150.

From a close study of the last two in particular I have drawn extensively in preparing this article. The individual references made to them in the following pages aim to indicate at least those instances where the indebtedness is most direct.

⁴ Cf. *Was ist Kulturgeschichte?* pp. 127 f.

century ; from which he acquired the knowledge of an intellectual life entirely different from that of to-day. Then supplementing the information drawn from written sources by a study of the art of the same century, he found the knowledge already acquired confirmed ; also that the general psychic disposition characterizing the art of the time was identical with that of customs and literature. Wishing, now, to measure the difference between the spirit of the feudal epoch and that of to-day, it soon became evident to him that the only way to make this difference intelligible was to follow the various changes from century to century down to the present time ; therefore he extended his task to gaining a clear view of the successive, psychically different periods of the last eight hundred years of German history. Meanwhile, however, he had come to the conclusion that all these studies would remain in the air unless he followed at the same time the development of civilization on the material sides of life. The thoroughness of his researches in this direction is fully illustrated in the *Deutsches Wirtschaftsleben im Mittelalter*.

But could there be, after all, common foundations for the various classes of phenomena ? This exceedingly difficult problem was approached first in the field of *Geistesleben* ; and here, happily, certain deeper relations were found characterizing the development of art, literature, religion, customs and law. It proved that in these domains six different periods of growth can be discovered : one of symbolism, before the tenth century ; of typism, from the tenth to the thirteenth ; of conventionalism, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth ; of individualism, during the sixteenth, seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth ; and finally, one of subjectivism, since the middle of the eighteenth. And that which is common to all these periods is, that from epoch to epoch the soul-life becomes more and more intense ; its composition grows finer ; the passions become more balanced, the power of interpretation and the methods of intellectual activity more searching. Of greater importance, however, than this discovery was a second : that the stages found to be characteristic of the development of civilization on the side of purely *geistig* phenomena proved to be identical at basis with the chronological divisions in the growth of civilization on the material side of life. So, the period of symbolism corresponds essentially with the industry of fishermen, hunters, shepherds and very primitive farmers (*occupatorische Wirtschaft*) ; the epochs of typism and conventionalism respectively with two especial features of that industrial activity which rested in general on the growth first of collective, then of private property in land (*Naturalwirtschaft*) ; while individualism and subjectivism fall in likewise with two similar stages—col-

lective and individual—in that régime which exchanges and pays in money (*Geldwirtschaft*).¹

Once this result was reached it became clear that all the so-called social-psychic factors must have some inner coherence; and that coherence Lamprecht tries to point out, not for the entire evolution of the German people, to be sure, but for that fragment of the general typical unfolding covered by the periods just named. It appears in the fact that this fragment of the general unfolding is tied together through its successive stages by one common, all-pervading tendency; namely, a constantly increasing intensity of the social-psychic life. *Geldwirtschaft* is a more intensive form of economic activity than *Naturalwirtschaft*. The painting of a Dürer, in the individualistic period, is more intensive than that of the miniaturists of the conventionalistic epoch; and at the same time less intensive than that of, say, Adolph Menzel in the period of subjectivism.

One's justification in arranging the periods according to the principle of a progressing psychic intensity, it is worthy of remark, need not rest on empirical grounds alone; for support can also be found in certain general psychological facts.² The principle of the creating synthesis holds for the social-psychic as well as for individual-psychic causality: namely, that the sum of a number of creative psychic activities is not identical with the product of these same activities; the product is much greater. Now when a number of social-psychic factors, in continual activity, are arranged side by side, as is the case in any normal historical development, especially in any regular national unfolding, there must arise as a result of their working a continually increasing excess of psychic energy; that is, historical life must move in a constantly growing psychic intensity.

Having indicated the main paths followed by Lamprecht toward the writing of his *Deutsche Geschichte*, we may venture next on a more inclusive and direct characterization of its distinguishing ideas.

To begin with, according to the announcement prefixed to each volume of the second edition, the author seeks to describe, by the side of political development, first of all, the development of conditions and of the *Geistesleben*; for questions of civilization, compared with those properly political, are of equal, if not of far greater importance. He promises³ to make an earnest attempt to show clearly,

¹ Cf. further Lamprecht, *Deutsche Gesch.*, III., Einleitung.

² See page 447 in regard to the relations of individual and social psychology to history.

³ "Es wird der ernstliche Versuch gemacht, die gegenseitige Befruchtung materieller und geistiger Entwicklungsmächte innerhalb der deutschen Geschichte klarzulegen, sowie für die Gesamtentfaltung der materiellen wie geistigen Kultur einheitliche Grundlagen und Fortschrittsstufen nachzuweisen." *Deutsche Gesch.*, zweit. Aufl., Ankündigung.

in the field of German history, the mutually fructifying influence of material and spirit forces of development; and likewise to explain what have been the uniform foundations for, and the steps of progress, in, the united development of the material and spirit factors of civilization.¹ The thoughts thus stated so compactly echo the successive conclusions reached by Lamprecht in the course of preparing his History; and they bespeak the actual, fundamental features of that work.²

The regular factors in history, which find expression within the frame of national evolution, fall naturally into two broad classes: those which can be traced to the free-will impulses of individuals, and those which are imbedded in the collectivity of individuals. The first class is not subject to subdivision. It includes forces which, being directly related to some singular will, must be treated accordingly. In either lower or higher civilization, however, the activity of the individual is closely limited; whether less so in the higher than in the lower is even still a question. Whatever may be found, in particular instances, to have been the influence of a great personality, there are whole fields of history where such influence is possible only to the slightest extent; for example, those of customs, of so-called mythological ideas, of language, and in a certain sense, of law and industry. In all these directions the character of life is determined almost entirely by the psychic state of the collectivity of persons. What the individual can accomplish is little, and must first be assimilated and modified by the collectivity before it becomes a part of real historical life. In this connection arise many fruitful problems concerning the degree to which the individual's activity is assimilated, and in what measure the social body determines the activity of persons; but sure it is that strong personalities can push forward the tendencies of the psychic collectivity of a given time or in some particular place. By a specially keen understanding of the will, feelings and vague ideas of the social body, and by the power of expressing that understanding in deeds, they can assist these tendencies toward fuller clearness and wider acceptance. And they need not be slaves entirely of the drifts in the collectivity. They can contribute something from themselves.

The second class of regular factors on the contrary is subject to

¹ For these features, a summary of which follows, see, aside from the *Deutsche Geschichte* itself, Lamprecht's article on *Was ist Kulturgeschichte?* passim.

² The word material should not be understood as referring to dead elements of matter of any kind. It stands rather for those psychic factors of civilization which are most closely bound up with these dead elements. One can conceive of exertions, habits, ways of thinking in connection with economic activities without identifying them with land, grains, products of manufacture, mediums of exchange, and the like.

subdivision ; first of all, into natural on the one hand, and social-psychic on the other. Among natural factors may be named : climate ; quality of the soil ; configuration of the land ; features of the locality, especially relative amounts of land and water ; natural scenery, and nature phenomena ; flora and fauna ; anthropological character, particularly the physical nature of the people. These are all constant, and contribute continuous influences toward historical variation. They may be looked upon as conditions, in the proper sense of the word.

The social-psychic factors are to be found in the content of the *geistig* habits of the collectivity of a given time.¹ These are not to be admitted as conditions, though they are usually spoken of in this way, but as causes in themselves (*Ursachen*) of historical growth, of that which happens ; a view not new in itself but new in its application by a historian properly so called. If now one but reflects on the quantitative value of the causal capacity in the social-psychic factors, on their never-ending creating of new power, he will understand clearly enough, for the purposes of this article, in what measure they outweigh personal initiative, even that of the strongest, and how, out of their combination especially, go forth those irresistible psychic streams which rule the world. To describe these factors as they have been in any given time or place, it is not sufficient to construct a sort of mosaic, or schematic co-ordination of the different classes of facts ; it is not enough to look at them thus, as a background, as passive conditions subject to handling by individuals. They are much rather to be represented as living, working forces, of strong causal capacity, and united in a never-ending, never-resting conflict.

But after all, what are these factors ? How many of them are there ? How shall they be described further ? Indeed, to understand at all the real nature of these several factors, and to determine their number with relative accuracy, it is of comparatively little help to classify them under such names as moral, intellectual, æsthetic, religious, legal, political, industrial, and so on. Rather should each one be studied in the light of its origin and gradual development. It so happens, however, that the deeper exploration of these ground-elements in history can be carried to an end only with the aid of ethnology, psychology and physiology ; for the historian himself cannot work back of the time or stage of progress at which a people begins to look upon itself historically. At present, to be sure, the results are largely provisional ; but for the sake of some sort of a

¹“Die sozial-psychischen Faktoren bestehen in dem Inhalt des geistigen Gesamthabitus einer Zeit.” *Was ist Kulturg.* ? p. 112.

genetic, specific classification of the foundations of historical life they should be accepted as a working basis. Accordingly, as social-psychic forces of earliest origin, corresponding to will, imagination, and feeling as activities of individual *geistig* life, appear industry, consisting at first purely of a struggle to sustain the species; the simplest form of thinking, bound up with language; and the most rudimentary expressing of the feelings, the beginnings of art. Later, as the individual-psychic activities become more definitely incorporated into the social body, customs, myths and an ornamental-symbolical art are evolved; and out of these in turn gradually arise religion and morals. Finally, as remoter reflections of the original evolution-potencies,—namely, will, imagination, or representative power, and feeling,—appear law, science and the higher expressions of art.

With the exception of scientific thinking and highly developed art, all these factors show themselves at the beginning of the historical period of folk-life, and they exist in a social-psychic unity, closely bound together and at all times dependent upon each other. Heretofore it has been the custom to emphasize some particular one, and to make others of inferior importance or suppress them altogether. Many have assigned the chief position to the moral forces, others have considered the material elements as all-determining, while still another large school have found the real agent of progress to be the intellect. These views, however, are all one-sided. The world of social-psychic forces is a unity, and as a unity it must be studied and understood. There is as little right in subordinating the sum of forces to some particular one as in holding any one of them unworthy of consideration; for no one of these forces has an existence of its own. A connection arising out of the most intense acting and reacting upon each other pervades them, while at the same time the product of this inter-activity is itself subject to the influence of similar products of the past and in turn acts as a cause for the future; and therefore none of them can be left out of account in efforts to determine the character either of any particular factor or of all together at a given time.

Since the product of these factors forms a unity, it is the factors all together which vary from epoch to epoch; and their varying can be subjected to periodization. The periods as arranged for German history, have already been described.¹ But further, Lamprecht looks upon his arrangement of civilization-epochs not as peculiar to the evolution of the Germans; they promise to be as well, *mutatis mutandis*, the typical stages for other peoples.² It

¹ See pages 433, 434.

² *Was ist Kultur?* p. 130.

may be asked, however, what scientific guarantee is there that these are the true periods for one people, to say nothing of all. Is their succession an unalterable historical law? What value, in general, can be assigned to them? So far only empirical and psychological considerations have been offered in view of these questions.¹ For a more substantial answer we must examine the method employed in determining the periodization agreed upon.

In conformity with the proposition that the determination of typical, social-psychic stages of development has throughout the character of a statistical induction,² Lamprecht has employed the method of statistics. If, then, the periods of civilization he describes are those reflected in statistical tables, they are worth no more than any well determined statistical rule; they can be characterized by only such laws as the logic of the method permits; that is, rules possessing almost the nature of laws, true only in general. But these rules are not lightly to be passed over because of their incompleteness, for they have a certain specific value. In every statistical observation, one has to distinguish between the constant and the variable; he recognizes that permanent causes lie below the one, transitory under the other; and the generalizations he makes seek to express correlations among the phenomena in question, and to indicate therewith the causal connections. The method being entirely inductive, he has but to descend successively to deeper and deeper levels in order to reveal more fundamental relations, and each constant interdependency discovered is a step toward an explaining of the final, fundamental bond. Statistics, in establishing the fact of connection between phenomena, lays the foundation for search after the deeper causes of these connections. Such is the rôle of this comparative method in any field where, in the midst of complicated inter-acting forces, specific successions can be shown to exist. So in biology, there is no law known that such or such an acorn must grow into an oak tree; but under normal conditions it will. Likewise with the periods of social-psychic evolution; no people has to go through these stages, but if the development is normal each one will. In biological science men have already worked long to determine deeper causes, and to frame empirical laws. Lamprecht enters in his *Deutsche Geschichte* on similar questions for the historical field. It may be freely asserted, however, that whatever generalizations are found, whatever solutions are reached, whatever fundamental forces are revealed, the end will not be disclosed; the last cause will remain as much unseen in the his-

¹ See pages 434, 435.

² *Was ist Kulturg.* ? p. 133.

tory of men as it is in the history of plants and animals. Nevertheless we have the satisfaction of knowing that that which may be discovered by this path will have such value as can be imparted by pure induction ; that it will not be deduced from irrational hypotheses.

There are left now two other questions in regard to these regular factors : First, granted that they exist in a unity and in continual interdependence, can their mutual relations be more exactly stated? If, indeed, one puts aside the theories of the older schools concerning the autocracy of intellect, or of moral or "material" forces, his first impression as to the deeper connections is that the material and *geistig* groups move along side by side without being bound into each other by any particular ties that are susceptible of direct proof ; in relations, therefore, similar to those between body and spirit, between matter and life in general—a sort of psychophysical parallel. On this view rest some occasional considerations in the first volumes of the *Deutsche Geschichte* ; but the author recognizes now that they are not tenable. The relations between the individual factors are neither so simple nor so inexplicable.¹

In any given, highly complicated mass of varying inter-activities, the typical stages of development extend severally to just those limits within which may be discerned the highest level of a particular sort of civilization. The characteristic elements of the different stages, however, need not necessarily reach every part of the social body of the time. Only in the primitive ages of undifferentiated national life, when there is relative homogeneity of the mass, does it seem that this can occur. Later, on the other hand, when new elements move out as a rule from the higher classes, they can exist for centuries without reaching the entire people. So in none but a limited sense can the periods of civilization be given a chronological character, namely, according to the sway of specially characteristic factors. In certain classes of the society, psychic elements of earlier stages may live on and never yield to others. The different periods have, therefore, no distinct boundaries ; they are rather dovetailed into each other. The most ancient types live beside the youngest ; the most highly cultured have neighbors struggling only for a living.

The oldest social-psychic factors, then, must always have the strongest influence, for of them alone is it to be presumed that they pervade the whole civilized body, and that their activities—varying to be sure with the successive stages of evolution—must, since in themselves they never die, have higher and higher value as time

¹ *Was ist Kulturg.*? p. 138.

goes on. Consequently, the oldest social-psychic factors—those, that is, which are bound up in industry, in language, and in that class of general aspirations out of which art, for example, arises¹—have for every epoch in history an imperishable meaning; there is no social-psychic phenomenon, of the lowest or highest degree of civilization, in which their working cannot be discerned. The earlier stages of progress they control predominantly; it is a recognized fact that then customs, morals, and law depend, far differently than in a higher stage, upon the industrial life of the time. In later periods, however, the significance of these primitive elements moves gradually into the background, not because they are weaker, but because they are hidden more and more by the advancement of certain *geistig* factors.

Finally, considerations such as these point to a second question: By what road or roads do the new products, the new elements of civilization, reach the different parts of the social body? The possibility of their gradual assimilation is to be found in the constantly progressing organization of the civilized body. Clearly the social-psychic factors do not work, in general, directly upon each other; but only indirectly, through the medium of the social organization. In a further defining of this medium,² then, lies the answer to our question.

The development of the social groups is really only another side of the differentiation of the social-psychic factors; whence it follows that the most primitive social group is that natural group bound together solely by the tie of language. Perhaps, however, just as old are the earliest industrial bonds. Gradually the *geistig* bonds come into prominence, and there appear festival associations, organizations for worship, and finally churches. These are all of primitive root, while the higher groupings in *geistig* social-psychic life, resting on common artistic or scientific possessions, belong (as complete products at least) to a time of more individualistic civilization. The typical latest formation of all the primitive organizations, and at the same time the highest, is that of the law, and for the maintenance of law the State. Moreover, since the State is the highest social organization, it is also the most general; and, where evolution is normal, appears in co-ordination with the sum of the natural group-formations, the Nation. Since the State is the last and most general organization, it includes all other groups, and has the duty of representing them outside of the nation, together with absolute power over them in so far as provision for this representing is concerned. Naturally

¹ "Streben nach Erhöhung der psychischen Eindrücke." *Was ist Kulturg.*? p. 140.

² *Was ist Kulturg.*? pp. 141-142.

this power extends its influence inwardly as well ; and for that reason all social group-formations strive on their side to work upon that influence just as the State is exerting itself upon them. In consequence, the State holds that central position which it takes in history : It is the medium through which all social force-strivings or tendencies act, whether these go out from itself or from other organizations.

The regular factors in historical life, then, appear and grow within the nation. They are the natural, the individual, and the social-psychic. These, however, do not constitute the whole sum of influences to which any given people may be subject ; for evolution goes on also under the working of certain general or world-tendencies. When the civilization of one nation is brought by any means into contact with that of another, there is an interchange of influences. It may be by the processes of a renaissance or by some action between peoples of the same period ; in any case historical development is largely determined in this way.

So far we have tried to point out some of the characteristic features of the *Deutsche Geschichte* ; and at the same time to bring them into the light of Lamprecht's own explanations. This has been done mainly with the hope that by such means certain ideas might be introduced and in part explained, which, though bearing ample fruit in many quarters, are apparently not yet recognized widely enough by students and teachers of history. In attempting a further exposition of these ideas it seems best at this point to extend the circle of thought so as to include a view of the essential differences between some old and new tendencies in historical work.

One of the first impressions coming from a look in this direction is, that after several decades of criticism and study of details, we are gradually coming into another period of generalization. But this does not express the fundamental changes in progress during the last two decades. There will, indeed, always be a place for critical scholarship ; under no circumstances can "the establishment of the facts" be dispensed with, nor the methods of work that have grown up with it. Historical scholarship, however, with all its machinery, and history, in the proper sense of the term, stand for entirely different things. The first is a tool, a means to an end, for the latter as well as for several social sciences. Men will never quit looking for the different bearings of known facts, among others their historical bearings ; and so trials will always be made to discern by what roads and through what experiences the world of men and of nations has come to be what it now is. The old and new tendencies, then, for which we are searching, must be only in the field of his-

tory proper. But still further limits can be set to the region where we may expect to look for them with success.

It has been the custom of late to make such distinctions as the following: Formerly there was an attempt to write general history, while now-a-days one studies nations, or one particular line, like the history of art, of religion, or of law; formerly more attention was given to political facts, now more to economic influences; again, idealistic conceptions have been gradually yielding to positive, materialistic views of human happenings. The last example, in particular, is not only inadequate in its explanation, but indicates besides an especially unscientific spirit. For whatever truth may be found in some of the current stock antitheses, certainly those which rest upon a difference of philosophic theory should be entirely discarded. There can be no truly scientific historical work which is inspired by such views—idealistic, positive or whatever else they may be. History is properly—though the fact is, alas, too little recognized—an inductive science,¹ and its progress depends not so much on the classes of facts it may incorporate or renounce from time to time, as on the degree in which it adopts, develops and applies inductive methods. From the point of view, therefore, of differences in method let us compare the old and the new tendencies.

When history had once added to its annalistic functions the duty of observing the sequence of facts, and had begun to ask after the why, it freely applied the principle involved in the question: What is the object in view? The object was adopted as the cause. Moreover, the ends sought were always particular, individual, of concrete nature; they led from fact to fact. It was the rule, for example, in the last century to refer that which happened, in so far as it was rationally explained at all, back to isolated, single acts. The principles of personal object and of individual psychology were applied to the whole field of human activity.² Evidently, to proceed thus is to draw all forms of causality into one class. Against this view, the idea of causality in general has been slowly gaining ground. The principle of end-in-view can clearly enough be applied as cause in a large proportion of human phenomena: those, namely, in which the action is connected especially with individual motive, is thought out, is already planned. But just as clearly is there a great proportion of human phenomena in which no particular object is involved. The individual acts, often enough, without thinking at all. There is, indeed, an immeasurable field of customary, generic happenings

¹ Cf. Lamprecht, *Alte und neue Richtungen*, pp. 3,4.

² This point of view has now few or no defenders in theory. In practice, however, consciously or unconsciously, it is still frequently occupied.

in which, since all people act in essentially the same way where the conditions are the same, the individual factor in the deed recedes completely into the background. How explain such phenomena by the end-in-view? Rather must the causal tie, pure and simple, be here brought into service.

From these considerations it appears that the historical method may properly fall into two divisions, corresponding to two sides of historical research: one dealing with the singular, the other with the general; the one individual, the other collective.¹ Not that the two are ever clearly separated; on the contrary, they are always amalgamated, whether it be in the line of art—one should distinguish between the artist and the style—literature, law, industry, politics, or in any other field. But since the two methods are so generally and so closely bound up in each other, their respective limits are only the more likely to be disregarded. True, much blame has to be laid on each of them. Whatever may be said against the teleological principle, the causal certainly has at times borne down the scale too low on its side. Yet, when followed with such precautions as the very nature of the material prescribes, how endless seems the possible application! For only one condition accompanies its use: that the last determined causal relation shall be in harmony with all those previously known. The progress this principle has already made may be seen partly in the complaints of some representatives of the older school;² partly, again, and to more advantage, in the relation it holds to the evolutionary studies which form so prominent a feature of recent historical work.³ In fact no one can write history from an evolutionary point of view, unless the facts can be bound together causally so that the representation of them may proceed in chains of reasoning whose several links are tied together as by necessity.⁴ The teleological view goes from the facts back to some motive; but there is nothing absolutely necessary thus brought out, for each motive in the chain may have resulted from free-will decision. History written after this manner must be pragmatical, while the evolutionary representations, on the contrary, are

¹ "Individuale, eminente Handlungen werden immer durch im Sinn des Zweckbegriffes verlaufende Hypothesen miteinander zu verknüpfen sein. Handlungen dagegen und Handlungskomplexe, welche sich als einer bestimmten Lebenshaltung gewöhnlich angehörig charakterisieren, mithin generischer Natur sind, werden der Aufhellung durch Hypothesen bedürfen, die von der Annahme eines kausalen Verhältnisses ausgehen. Demgemäss treten als die beiden Seiten geschichtlicher Forschung Personen- und Lebenshaltungsgeschichte, individuelle und generische oder kollektivistische Geschichte auseinander." *Alte u. neue Richtungen*, p. 6.

² The recent historical controversy in Germany furnishes several illustrations.

³ See K. Breysig, *Ueber Entwicklungsgeschichte*, in the *Deutsche Zeitschr. für Geschichtswiss.*, N. F., 1896-97, pp. 161-174 and 193-211.

⁴ *Alte u. neue Richtungen*, p. 9.

characterized by the widest possible causal conception of that which happens.

The significance of the use of purely inductive methods appears to good advantage in their application to the phenomena of constitutional law.¹ The practice of the older school has been to picture the conditions of a given period by systematic arrangement of particular categories of facts; and then, when the succession in time of several such social states has been shown, by the medium of juridic thinking—by a formal road, that is—to trace the descent of the different categories of later from those of earlier conditions, without considering that every single tracing of origins should have regard for the united, inter-dependent life pervading each social state. The new, evolutionary historical research, on the contrary, aims to show rather the development-tendencies lying at the basis of each particular institution. The formal garb of the institution, up to late years the preferred, almost the only, subject of study, takes a secondary place; its structure is seen clearly enough as soon as a deeper study reveals the several evolution-movements which condition that structure. The chronologically arranged pictures of the constitutional conditions give place to the representation of a permanent stream of industrial and other social transformations, whose mutual relations at any given time determine the contemporary social organization. Nor does this mean that the work of description should be given up. It will indeed always have its place, namely, to show what was developed at such and such a period; therein, however, lies only a part of the historian's mission. The evolutionary method is more intensive; it wishes to determine the real components of social life, and then to understand that life better by following the mutual relations and changes of these components.

Nevertheless, not all members of the older school have limited themselves to such work as that of the descriptivists. A considerable number of those writing from the individual, from the political point of view in the narrower sense, have tried to go to the root of things, to show what essential factors have been at work in history, and to refer that which happens to their activities and mutual relations. The most notable of these in the present century is the great master himself, Ranke; and to this day he seems to be the patron saint of a widely extended cult. If, now, we follow his disciples to their shrine of shrines and study their innermost thoughts, the difference between the earlier and the later tendencies will appear still more striking.

Without attributing to Ranke any particular philosophical sys-

¹ Cf. Lamprecht's review of Inama-Sternegg's *Deutsche Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, II., in the *Jahrb. für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, 1895, LXIV. 294 ff.



tem, it can be said that his historical thinking centers fundamentally about two points,¹ an idealistic view of the world, in the sense of the *Identitätsphilosophie*, and a universalistic conception of history, essentially in the sense of the cosmopolitanism of the classical German literature.

He was conscious of a God who is hidden to the world but who at the same time fills it all; a God whose relations to us are mystical, not to be understood by the reason. He manifests himself in man; the actions of man are determined by a mysterious Being; so, further, the products of human action are manifestations of that Being. All history is at basis a divine mystery. The world of everyday life with which we stand in immediate relation and to which the reason can be applied, is one of appearance, not the real world.² Closely associated with these views is his idea of universal history. In the actions of men, and of nations or states, must be found that which is general. The actors must all be studied to discover in what degree they express divinely originating powers which work through them. Individual, nation and state are agents of a world movement; and in so far only do they form the real material of history. Such, in brief, are the general hypotheses of Ranke's ideology. Furthermore, the mediating powers—those, that is, which while acting in the world are connected in some mysterious way with God—are the “ideas” which Ranke was always telling about. They are “the objective ideas,” “the higher potencies,” “the powers born in the elements and holding them together,” “the general ideas that bear in themselves the life of the human race,” “the powers of the living *Geist* which move the world from its foundations;” they “have in them that which is divine and eternal;” they are “the thoughts of God in the world;” “they are life-giving, are life itself, are moral energies;” “though not to be defined, they can be perceived;” “they unfold, take their place in the world, come forth in the most varied forms, combat, limit and overcome one another. In their acting and reacting upon each other, their succession, their life, their passing away and coming again, lies the great secret of history.”

It is hard to detect here much of the scientific spirit of to-day. No matter how high the value ascribed to Ranke, he remains the child of another age. To him the phenomena of the historical world are not explainable through forces inherent in its being and activity; for him the task does not consist in characterizing, always

¹ Compare, for this discussion of Ranke, Lamprecht's *Ideenlehre und die Jung-*rankianer**, and the references there given; No. II. in *Alte und neue Richtungen*.

² “Der Welt der Wahrheit steht eine Welt des Scheins gegenüber, die auch in die Tiefe geht und immer tieferen Schein entwickelt, bis sie in die Wesenlosigkeit ausgeht; jene endet im Wesen.” Ranke, *Gesam. Werke*, LIII.–LIV. 570.

more closely in consequence of ever more intensive research, the expressions of these forces, and in tracing them wherever possible to simple inherent unities—finally back to a few agents. To his mind the aim of science is not the unification of the elements of knowledge, but rather the determination of a large number of special movements, each of which results from the action of some particular "idea."¹ Moreover, be the reasons what they may, on the eve of the twentieth century there are still circles of influence where, to a greater or less degree, Ranke's way of thinking prevails. Frequently enough one reads of the *geistig* factors as the only working forces; of the others as conditions, pure and simple. Notwithstanding great discoveries in causality, in the world of *Schein*, teleological proofs still flourish. But against this irrationalism rises, stronger each year, an entirely different spirit. "I can very well think of a world," says Lamprecht, "one part of which appears to me as intelligible, while another part I must characterize as non-intelligible; under the condition that the problems of this latter are to be solved in the future, even if a late, perhaps endless future."² Further, as for general history, to the modern school the Rankian point of view is unthinkable. Some time one may be able to make trustworthy generalizations in the universal realm; but for the present historical research, like that in the natural sciences, is more intensive and applies itself especially to national development, in the hope of discovering there the simplest components of historical life. It holds that the fundamental elements do not consist of the actions of eminent persons, nor of the deeds of states as such; but rather of those factors which, taken all together and in their varied mutual relations and transformations, form the *Kultur* of the time. It sees the general currents moving along in a succession of periods of civilization. It seeks the typical stages which appear regularly in the unfolding of each nation, and looks upon the different peoples as bound together in world-history by a network of influences between the civilization of the various nations in their typically recurring stages of evolution. Each folk will receive from others into its own current those factors which it is at the given period able to assimilate, and may even bring that which it receives to higher perfection.

In view of the foregoing statements, two prominent tendencies are to be observed in the historical science of the last few generations. One of these, that of the older school, may be called individualistic, descriptive, political, since its representatives have been especially those who maintain that the political field is the proper one for history. Its essential characteristics imply an emphasis of

¹ *Alte u. neue Richtungen*, pp. 43-44.

² *Alte u. neue Richt.*, p. 73.

eminent persons, of the state, and of man in general. The other, that of the younger school, now rapidly advancing, is collectivistic ; while recognizing the part played by individuals, it emphasizes first of all the activities of natural associations, the highest being that of the nation-state. Have we noticed clearly enough, however, what are the real foundations of the differences between these schools, and whether the one method is not, after all, a complement of the other ?

It seems to be pretty well agreed that psychology must be taken as the basis of historical science, in fact of all the *Geisteswissenschaften*, in much the same way as mathematics is for the natural sciences.¹ But this being so it follows that the progress of these sciences depends in large part on the progress of psychology. Just here lies the explanation for which we are seeking. The old psychology, in so far as it was empirical, was individual psychology ; it looked upon man in general as a great abstract individual, the folk as a sort of mechanical aggregate of persons. Out of it grew the theory of the social contract. On such ground rested historical writing in the days of Schlosser and Ranke ; and in many respects that of the older school, though often unconsciously, perhaps, still rests upon it. The individual with them is the main subject of research ; and some even go so far as to say—Schäfer,² for example—that only the persons of special importance are, properly, to be considered. The new psychology, on the other hand, has taken an entirely different attitude ; more and more it has turned toward generic research ; and while the explanation of the simpler psychic phenomena may still be left to the old method, the solution of many especially involved problems is, in part at least, sought through social-psychic studies.

With this change are brought to light new fields for historical research ; new causal relations can be established, and an evolutionary record drawn up. For it appears that just as a consciousness of a harmony differs from that of the different tones composing it, so when a greater or less number of human beings feel something, think something in common, the feeling or thought of all together is different from the sum of individual feelings or thoughts that enter into its composition. In each case the product of the whole includes something qualitatively new. In the one instance we call it harmony, in the other it may be, for example, public opinion, or patriotism. Given this law and its operation on society, it is clear that every social organization must be constantly creating a certain product over and above the sum of the activities it embraces, and in so far we have to reckon with a factor in social-psychic causality for

¹ Compare *Was ist Kultur?* pp. 77-87, and the references there given, especially those to Wundt and Paulsen.

² *Geschichte und Kulturgeschichte*, 1891, p. 60. Compare also his pamphlet on *Da eigentliche Arbeitsgebiet der Geschichte*, 1888.

which individuals in themselves are not responsible. Why call such factors supernatural? Why class them as irrational "ideas?" Moreover, is it not evident that in dealing with social formations the historian must recognize forces in reference to which the value of any one person is identical with that of his associates; that to the extent to which individuals unite in producing one of these social-psychic elements, they are regular, typical? But at the same time, also, irrespective of their typical value, shall he not credit at least many individuals with historical significance of their own? In truth, not all consent to the view indicated; there are those still who see at basis the singular, not the regular. The common nature of all scientific work should be kept in mind. By analysis we determine the characteristics of each object or phenomenon; by synthesis we try to bring data into their proper relations, to discover their associations, their causal connections. The natural sciences began earlier to practise sane synthetic thinking, and so are far advanced to-day. For historical science to adopt it with the same heartiness does not necessarily mean to adopt the methods of natural science; it means, rather, adopting the true methods of science in general. The so-called collective school are seeking now the evolutionary, causal relations; they are trying to synthesize. But there is plenty of room for the individualists as well. Whatever the rational has not yet conquered, must be subjected to further analysis; and especially in the realm of purely individual free-will activity, the descriptive workers can find ample opportunity to supplement the results of synthesis.

✕ To summarize briefly, the new history takes into account all the activities of man as a social being; political phenomena are neither the only facts to be considered, nor the state the element for which alone all others exist. It recognizes as the essentials in historical life certain natural, individual and social-psychic factors, whose nature, transformations and mutual relations form the civilization of any given time. The new history—and herein lies its really fundamental feature—holds to the principle of describing the human past from the point of view of rational evolution. It asks not "*Wie ist es eigentlich gewesen?*" but "*Wie ist es eigentlich geworden?*" It aims to go as near the beginning as art or science can tread; and studies to find the typical stages of development for each nation, together with the currents of life running between the different peoples. By adhering strictly to inductive methods, it hopes to trace at last just how the world of men and of nations has grown into what it is to-day and so to put into the hands of philosophy trustworthy, scientific conclusions.

EARLE WILBUR DOW.

METAL EDGE, INC. 2007 PH 7.5 TO 9.5 P.A.T.

